

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend paragraph [0001] as follows:

[0001] This application is a continuation of U. S. application Serial No. 09/585,590, filed June 2, 2000, abandoned, which is a ~~utility conversion~~ non-provisional application claiming the benefit of U. S. Application Serial No. 60/137,815, filed June 4, 1999, all of which are incorporated herein by reference. This Application is also related to U.S. application Serial No. 08/993,208 filed on December 18, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 6,130,200.

Please amend paragraph [0014] as follows:

[0014] A highly effective system for controlling burst of a beneficial agent from an implant is described in related application Serial No. 08/993,208 filed December 18, 1997, which issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,130,200 on October 10, 2000. Such systems are based on polymer/solvent compositions that form a gel and control the rate of ingress of water into the bulk polymeric system, thereby reducing the burst of beneficial agent which might otherwise occur upon exposure to the environment of use. Notwithstanding the effectiveness of such systems and the advantageous results achieved by controlling the bulk characteristics of the polymer matrix, it has been found that additional improvements in the controlled release of the active agent can be achieved by combining such systems with beneficial agent that is present in a controlled microenvironment within the gel as described herein.

Please amend paragraph [0071] as follows:

[0071] The implantable carrier for the beneficial agent may be formed as a gel. The gel may be viscous and formed of a polymer. The gel may be formed of components such that bulk water uptake in the implant also is restricted. Preferred carrier system include those systems that have been described in detail in copending application Serial No. 08/993,208 filed December 18, 1997, which issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,130,200 on October 10, 2000, and its corresponding PCT counterpart application bearing international publication number WO 98/26359 and international publication date July 2, 1998. That published application may be referred to for

details of bulk polymer systems that are particularly useful with the present invention. However, other polymer systems may be used as well.